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Environmental Change and Challenge:

A Canadian Perspective

by Philip Dearden and Bruce Mitchell. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998. Pp. ix, 565. \$75.95.

Environmental policies remain an area of controversy in Canada and around the world. This book was written as an introductory text for students in environmental science or environmental studies. However, its wide range of case studies, concepts and methods makes it a valuable reference text for policy analysts interested in Canadian environmental issues. The case studies range from well-known national controversies to local cases using alternative dispute resolution methods to mediate a solution among affected parties.

The concepts and methods are presented in a clear and well-structured sequence of 22 chapters. The format of using boxes of different colours for the examples and photographs in order to illustrate the case studies enhances the appeal of the text. Each chapter contains a summary, review questions, references, and suggested readings.

The book surpasses other general environmental texts by capturing the reader's interest from the start. The discovery of buried refinery wastes on a farm purchased by a young family provides the opening case study. The role of various actors is reviewed as the question of liability and compensation is explored. This local example captures the reader's interest as they realize that environmental problems exist next door as well as at the global level.

Resource and environmental management issues are set in the context of the scientific understanding of related processes. The concept of sustainable development is thoroughly reviewed as the context for many policy initiatives. The policy context is balanced by an overview of the physical ecozones of Canada. The remainder of the text is divided into five sections: the ecosphere, environmental management strategies, resource and environmental management in Canada, and environmental change and challenge revisited.

The ecosphere section reviews energy flows, nutrient flows, and ecosystem change. Environmental processes are reviewed in terms of the scientific understanding of the cycles underway and the ways in which human activities interfere with the cycles and cause environmental change. Examples include greenhouse gases, acid deposition, nutrient levels/eutrophication, ozone depletion, and loss of biodiversity.

The section on environmental management strategies covers a wide range of approaches. The ecosystem approach, adaptive management, impact assessment, shareholder participation and empowerment, and various forms of conflict resolution are reviewed and illustrated with case studies. The scope and implications of each approach are identified.

Conflict is recognized as a natural part of environmental management with a well-established lifecycle. The resolution of conflicts through judicial and alternative means is explored along with the critical factors that can contribute to successful resolution.

Resource and environmental management in Canada is examined on a thematic basis with chapters on urban areas, agriculture, forestry, endangered species, endangered spaces, water, energy, and the global commons. Over 200 pages provide a rich overview of the famous and little known cases from across the country.

The controversy over Clayoquot Sound is examined in detail in the final section of the book as a means to revisit the evolution of environmental management in Canada. Changes are recognized in the roles of various stakeholders as government policies changed in response to input from First Nation peoples, scientific advisors, environmental groups, and industry representatives.

The book departs from the usual academic practice of appearing to maintain a distance from its subject by using the last chapter to invite the reader

to participate in the process of addressing the environmental issues. The focus on empowering the individual to alter their own behaviour is refreshing. An extensive list of addresses of conservation organizations, their addresses, and web-sites are provided.

Overall, the book provides an exciting knowledge base for students not only to observe, but to engage in debates on environmental issues in Canada. It is not designed for policy analysts who want detailed information on particular cases, but it provides a useful resource to set the context for particular disputes.

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Misconceiving Canada: The Struggle for National Unity

by Kenneth McRoberts. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997. Pp. xvii, 395. \$26.95.

Whistling Past the Graveyard: Constitutional Abeyances, Quebec, and the Future of Canada

by David M. Thomas. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997. Pp. 263.

The images conjured up by the titles of these two books are clear — and consistent with two decades or more of academic commentary on Canada's never-ending constitutional crisis. Ken McRoberts — long an eminent student of Quebec affairs and charter member of what might be called the "Toronto School of National Unity" — represents his views as a critique of the fundamental misunderstanding, willful and even malicious in its worst manifestations, upon which the federal government's position and policies on national unity have largely been based over the past 30 years. The critique is a wide-ranging one since, as he ably shows, all of our national political parties and many public figures have tended to share in the same misconception of the country and what is needed to deal with its most serious division. David Thomas — writing from a western Canadian perspective but building primar-

ily upon comparative and philosophical insights — covers much the same ground and comes to many of the same conclusions, while arguing for greater sensitivity to the continuing possibilities for accommodation and improvement offered by the existing constitutional order.

In many ways, the books are quite similar. Both authors specify the Quebec issue in terms of contending sovereignties: How can a recognition and acceptance of Quebec sovereignty be reconciled to the continuation of Canada as a bilingual and multicultural country? Both authors also agree on who the villain is: Pierre Trudeau and his unrealistic "vision" of a binational Canada based on individual rights and equal treatment of all provinces. Both authors are favourable to the same basic prescription for the future: a new partnership between Quebec and Canada premised upon an "asymmetrical federalism" combined with recognition of the "deep diversity" which contemporary Canada exhibits in abundance.

How each author develops his argument, however, is quite different. McRoberts presents essentially a counterfactual argument: What if, intellectually and politically, Pierre Trudeau's ideas had not predominated from the 1960s onwards but rather an alternative approach had been followed, based on compromise and partnership and embryonic in the conduct of federal-provincial relations by Lester Pearson and those sympathetic to his views? Starting from this premise, he sets out the subsequent history of the Quebec issue in an engaging way, teasing out insights here and there and tracing events through to the 1995 Quebec Referendum and after, while all the time concentrating on the steady demise of the Trudeau vision. A particular strength of his analysis lies in his stern critique of bilingualism and multiculturalism as the cornerstone policies pursued by successive federal governments in dealing with Canadian unity.

Thomas speaks to the Quebec issue in a different way, bringing a concept new to the Canadian

discourse and a different temperament to his analysis. The concept is that of “constitutional abeyances” as espoused by several contemporary British writers — those “gaps” or “silences” in how Canadians have chosen to govern ourselves, which we often fail to acknowledge but which have allowed us to live together over the years. Thomas’ temperament is distinctly Burkean: heavy on understanding the context and circumstance out of which our current constitutional practices arise, unconvinced of reliance on abstract principles, as sceptical of attempts at comprehensive constitutional change as of simple quick fixes. Nevertheless, akin to McRoberts, he wonders what might have happened if, for example, the decentralizing and regionalist analysis of the 1979 Pepin-Robarts Task Force had exercised more influence on subsequent federal government policies and actions.

Both books are accomplished treatments of the Quebec issue in Canadian politics, a complement to each though argued in very different ways. One disconcerting feature, however, is that the tendency to fix firmly on the Quebec issue largely to the exclusion of aboriginal, regional and other challenges to Canadian unity. Along with other recent studies, they occupy an emerging liberal nationalist middle ground, accepting the reality of contending sovereignties but pressing compromise and partnership in relations between Canada and Quebec.

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Planners & Politicians: Liberal Politics and Social Policies, 1957-1968

by P.E. Bryden. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997. Pp. xvii, 233. \$49.95.

The efforts of successive federal governments to erect and maintain a comprehensive social welfare system in Canada is arguably the largest single cause of conflict between the federal government and Quebec nationalists (including even the young Pierre

Trudeau). The conflict is fundamentally driven by the conflicting demands of anglophone Canadians for their national government to play a leading role in constructing the social safety net and the expectation of francophone Quebecers that the constitution be strictly respected. The role of the federal Liberal Party in this clash of expectations has been a critical one in the twentieth century and this history of the debate over social policy within the federal Liberal Party during the Pearson years is a welcome addition to the literature.

The author’s thesis is that there was a qualitative change in the nature of support within the Liberal Party for widening the social safety net during the Pearson years. The argument is not entirely convincing. Significant elements in the social welfare system — non-contributory old-age pensions, unemployment insurance, family allowances, universal hospital insurance, and components of what was later to become the Canada Assistance Plan — were in place by 1957. The Liberal Party’s fundamental commitment to the welfare state was made by Mackenzie King in 1919 and while there was significant opposition in the party to the two major achievements of the Pearson era — the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and the completion of medicare — they were well within the accepted parameters of the welfare liberalism which was a significant force in the party throughout the period.

What is more interesting is the author’s exploration of the connection between a more vigorous pursuit of these objectives and the changes within the Liberal Party which made it the champion of federal power and the “national” interest. This included the demise of the system of powerful regional Cabinet ministers presiding over (and representing the interests of) the interests of their fiefdoms. In their place, politicians such as Walter Gordon, party functionaries such as Keith Davey and advisors *cum* bureaucrat like Tom Kent sought to appeal to a national, predominantly urban electorate, concentrated particularly in Ontario, which they correctly believed welcomed the new federal initiatives. This is

one aspect of the transformation of the Liberal Party in the middle part of this century from the party of provincial rights to the party of Ottawa and the central government, and the author's description of the way this played out in the social policy area is thorough and convincing.

The Liberal approach to social policy ran into direct and open conflict with resurgent Quebec nationalism, most notably in the showdown and retreat in April 1964 about the design of the CPP. The author's analysis underestimates the magnitude of the shock to the federal government this represented by focusing on the distributional aspects of the CPP and ignoring Walter Gordon's plan to use the investment fund originally proposed to further the goals of economic development and economic nationalism. The solution to the 1964 impasse over the CPP — acceptance of the primacy of provincial jurisdiction in social welfare matters and making significant concessions to provincial wishes — has not generally recommended itself to subsequent federal Liberals (the abrupt retreat on the CPP may have been an exception because it was an area in which the federal spending power had little potential role). The federal Liberals' reluctance meaningfully to take provincial interests into account is underscored by the author's description of how the provinces (particularly Ontario) had done much more thinking about these issues, most of which was ignored or dismissed in Ottawa. This national unity side of the social safety net issue is not addressed by the author, perhaps reflecting the fact that the politicians, bureaucrats, and interest group representatives who were the actors in the story described were almost exclusively anglophone (and in the case of pensions, "blissfully unaware" of Quebec's work in the area). It is difficult to say whether this omission is inadvertent or deliberate. The author, who makes no secret of her support for the policies of Kent and Gordon, may take the view that national unity is not necessarily more important than a particular approach to social policy. While it would have been interesting to have this discussion of the topic explored, it would be unfair to dwell unduly on one

shortcoming in what is otherwise a thoroughly researched and well-written history of the topic.

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Labour Market Regimes and Patterns of Flexibility: A Sweden-Canada Comparison

by Axel van den Berg, Bengt Furaker and Leif Johansson. Lund, Sweden: Arkiv Forlag, 1997. Pp. 264.

Does greater economic insecurity help or hinder labour market flexibility? In this fascinating book, a binational panel of Canadian and Swedish academics compare labour market regimes and labour market flexibility in their two countries. The comparison is interesting because it is highly relevant to contemporary policy discussions in both countries, and also because it represents a way of testing the predictions of the neoclassical and institutional perspectives on modern labour markets. Most of the book, therefore, consists of a detailed examination of the evidence at three levels of analysis: aggregate labour market flows, case studies of firms (44 in Canada, 39 in Sweden) in paper, steel and telecommunications and survey data on individual workers' attitudes to change in the two countries between 1991 and 1993.

The authors interpret a "neoclassical" model of the labour market as one informed by the ideal of a perfectly competitive set of markets in which price and wage signals swiftly guide resources to their most efficient use. In this view, the emphasis is firmly on labour mobility between firms, rather than on functional flexibility within firms, and van den Berg *et al.* note:

what is distinctive about the neoclassical approach is not so much the denial that there are major and stubborn real world obstacles to the attainment of the ideal, perfectly efficient labour market ("positive" economics), but the belief that such obstacles constitute more or less avoidable impediments to the achievement of feasible

higher levels of allocative efficiency and that efforts to eliminate or curtail them are therefore worthwhile (“normative” economics). While they (neoclassicals) recognize the various groups of actors who seek security for themselves at the expense of overall efficiency, they argue that the best way to combat this tendency and thus to maintain or achieve efficiency is to eliminate as many of the opportunities to devise such protected niches as possible (p. 77).

Institutionalists, on the other hand, argue that the cooperation of workers is essential to the implementation of technological change and that if individuals are to cooperate, they need some assurances that they will not lose out as a result. As a consequence, “many of the factors that appear to the neoclassical economists as labour market ‘rigidities’ are in fact necessary for that market to function at all and hence, any attempt to eliminate them is seriously misguided” (p. 83).

The debate between these two perspectives is much more than an academic issue. Swedish economic policy has historically been informed by an institutionalist perspective and “the claim that increased employment security would reduce, not increase, workers’ resistance to change and hence significantly facilitate the process of rapid structural transformation of the economy is a constantly recurring theme in the writings and declarations of Swedish politicians and sympathetic observers” (p. 89).

The centrepiece of the Swedish model was, originally, “job security not in the firm but in the labour market” (p. 52) — the basis for which was a macroeconomic demand policy that kept aggregate unemployment low. Inflation was kept under control by a “solidaristic” centralized wage setting mechanism that simultaneously set wages high enough to squeeze low productivity firms out of business, and low enough to produce robust profits at high productivity firms. “Active” labour market policies of retraining and mobility assistance were relied on to speed through the transition of displaced labour from

declining to expanding sectors. In addition to easier availability of alternative jobs, Swedish workers have had a much more generous unemployment insurance system, and substantially stronger protections against job loss through labour legislation and nearly complete unionization. The authors contrast this high security environment with “the Canadian system of high unemployment and relatively little protection from either unions, labour market policies or the law” (p. 171).

Between-country comparisons of labour market institutions and behaviour are more meaningful if the countries are otherwise similar. An entire chapter is therefore devoted to demonstrating that “in terms of industrial structure and trade dependence the two countries are virtual twins, to a large extent due to their quite similar geographies” (p. 70). Although Sweden has a larger public sector, a somewhat older population and higher female labour force participation, the occupational structure and distributions of the labour force among industries are markedly similar. The authors therefore argue that “our Swedish-Canadian comparison comes as close to a ‘natural experiment’ as one is likely to get in doing this type of cross-national comparative research” (p. 224).

Some differences, however, escape discussion. There is no mention, for example, of the role played by federalism and provincial jurisdiction over labour relations in Canada, although one might wonder how the centralized Swedish model could possibly function in the Canadian constitutional setting. Implicitly, Canada is seen as rather homogenous in labour relations, with no consideration of possible regional differentials (even in Quebec). Most notably, although the later analysis places great stress on the greater willingness of Canadian, compared to Swedish, workers to move geographically in order to obtain employment, there is no mention of the much greater historical importance of immigration in Canadian society. Canada is a country now largely composed of immigrants, and their descendants, while Sweden is very different. In

1996, 18.6 percent of the Canadian population aged 25-44 were born outside Canada, and many of the Canadian born were second generation immigrants. As a consequence, there is more of a “culture of mobility” in Canada.

The issue of broad cultural norms is important, because a major objective of the “Swedish model” of economic management was to foster a widespread acceptance of structural economic change. The strongest finding of the authors’ attempts to explain the attitudes toward change of individual Canadian and Swedish workers is a strong “country effect” and the relative insignificance of individual level variables, when included in the same pooled regression. They also note that despite the considerable increase in unemployment in Sweden between 1991 and 1993, the institutional context remained largely untouched, and there was little change in the attitudes of individual Swedes toward economic change.

The authors’ interpretation of the Canadian and Swedish attitudinal survey results is that they offer no clear-cut support for either the institutional or neoclassical perspective — but one might wonder whether in looking at microdata regression results, which explain why an individual differs from the mean of the sample *to which they belong*, they are looking in the right place. They also interpret the macro data on aggregate job gain and loss, vacancies, skilled labour shortages, flows into unemployment and unemployment duration as indicating “striking similarities” in aggregate outcomes, despite very different institutional structures — which, they argue, vindicates conclusively neither the institutionalist nor the neoclassical perspective.

Many readers will undoubtedly find the case studies of plants in the pulp and paper, steel, and telecommunications sectors the most persuasive part of the book. The authors did enough interviews to get a good overview of each sector, yet they were able also to observe the subtle interactions of worker and firm strategies that occur at the plant level. One clear conclusion is that “there is no evidence what-

soever that Swedish managers are any more frustrated with worker or union obstructionism than their Canadian counterparts” (p. 161). There was a difference in the attitudes of Canadian and Swedish union officials (Swedish union officials being more favourably inclined toward change than their rank and file, while Canadian unionists are rather negative) — but such is the power of Canadian unions that “whether a plant in Canada was unionized or not did not seem to make that much difference” (p. 162).

In the end, the authors embrace a “neocorporatist” viewpoint, and argue that the enthusiasm of local Swedish union leaders for change, and their cozy relationships with plant managers, is partly driven by the prior decision of top union leaders to buy into an encompassing, overall bargain in which rapid structural change and wage restraint was traded off for low unemployment and substantial “social protection” for workers. They rightly stress the tensions such a model has to deal with when some workers and some firms perceive clear advantages to deserting their coalition.

Nevertheless, the “bottom line” of the book is that two very different constellations of labour market institutions have generated roughly equivalent levels of efficiency and similar outcomes in terms of international competitiveness and domestic prosperity. Along these dimensions, there is not much to choose. However, although the discussion is careful, scholarly and nuanced, one does wonder if the authors could not have drawn more from their data. It is clear from their survey evidence that Swedish workers have substantially fewer worries about economic security, and it is also clear from international comparisons of income distribution that Sweden has a higher level of economic equality. If greater social equality and enhanced personal security contribute to individual economic well-being, and if Swedish workers get more of both without having to accept lower incomes, one might have asked which system generates more social welfare.

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How Silent Were the Churches? Canadian Protestantism and the Jewish Plight during the Nazi Era

by Alan Davies and Marilyn F. Nefsky. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1997. Pp. xvi, 179. \$39.95.

This is a well-researched and well-written book. The authors, both academics, focus their attention around a claim made in an earlier study of anti-semitism in Canada that the churches remained silent in the face of Nazi anti-semitism during the Nazi era. In particular, the authors are interested in investigating the record of the Protestant churches of Canada which, outside Quebec, were the significant force shaping the nation's ethos. More specifically, the authors chronicle, through a series of denominational profiles, the actions and inactions of the United Church of Canada, the Church of England, the Presbyterian Church, Baptist churches, Lutherans, Mennonites, and Quakers. The authors have relied upon various sources of data, including official documents, sermons, and the church journals. The sources of their data are referenced meticulously. As they admit, their sequence of portraits necessarily include shades of light and shadow which means, for the reader, the answers to the questions are neither always clear nor simple. Nevertheless, the richness of the analysis is a reflection of the complexity of the problem under investigation.

While this is an examination of the position of Canadian Protestant churches during the Nazi era regarding the atrocities committed against the Jews, it is, fundamentally, a study about anti-semitism. Along this line, the authors offer a backdrop not only of anti-semitism in Canada but its manifestations in Europe. As the landscape of anti-semitism is too vast to chart in detail in this study, the authors' analysis, with respect to the responses of the churches, chiefly centres around the Third Reich's Aryan laws (1933-35), the *Kristallnacht* pogrom (1938), the refugee crisis resulting from Hitler's territorial violations (1939), and the Holocaust itself (1942-45).

In their conclusion, Davies and Nefsky return to the very question which motivated the study: How silent were the churches? The answer is not simple. For starters, silence does not easily correlate with inaction. Second, the churches did not respond in an identical fashion. Moreover, as the authors assert, the churches' responses were not motivated solely, or even mainly in some instances, by their theology. At issue was the manner in which the Canadian churches received and evaluated the accumulating evidence of the crimes in Nazi-occupied Europe.

In the end, a few central points emerge from this important book. First, an either/or answer to the churches responses is not possible; the picture is neither black nor white, but grey. Second, it is not at all clear that the churches were sufficiently influential to have changed government practices. And third, the fate of Jews, both because of the particular historical period but, more generally, because of their historical role in Christianity, was simply not very important to the majority of Canadians.

This volume adds an important piece to the mosaic of research about anti-semitism in Canada, and enables us to better understand how Protestant churches and their leaders responded to the horrible atrocities perpetuated by the Nazis against the Jews. Non-academics will find the volume an interesting read, and academics in such fields as sociology, religious studies, and politics will appreciate both the thoroughness of the research as well as the skilful and carefully-charted analysis woven by the authors.

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How Silent Were the Churches? Canadian Protestantism and the Jewish Plight during the Nazi Era

by Alan Davies and Marilyn F. Nefsky. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1997. Pp. xvi, 179. \$39.95.

Alan Davies and Marilyn Nefsky reopen one of the more controversial episodes in Canadian public policy in their book *How Silent Were the Churches?* The question is inspired by Irving Abella and Harold Troper's well-known book on Canada's attitude to Jewish immigration during the Nazi era, *None is Too Many*. Abella and Troper argue that "as long as the churches remained silent — which they did — the government could dismiss the [Canadian National Committee on Refugees and Victims of Political Persecution] members as well meaning but impractical idealists to be patronized but not taken seriously." Davies and Nefsky ask "Were the churches really silent? Or did they address the afflictions of the Jews of Europe?" In this short book, they limit their study to English-Canadian Protestantism, including the most important denominations as well as the smaller evangelical churches, the Quakers, and the Mennonites. Their method is simple: they search out the important publications of these churches and look for commentary on the four milestones of the persecution of Jews in Germany: the Aryan Laws (1933-35), *Kristallnacht* (1938), the refugee crisis (1939-45), and the Holocaust itself (1942-45). They supplement this material with biographies of prominent Christian lobbyists on behalf of Jewish refugees, public statements, and resolutions passed by church bodies. While their method may be simple enough, their agenda is ambitious: to understand from inside "the Canadian Protestant mentality in the thirties and forties (xiii)."

Davies and Nefsky approach this problem with appropriate sensitivity and refuse to make more judgements based on hindsight. They describe the context of the 1930s carefully, documenting the trauma of the great depression, its spiralling unem-

ployment, the subsequent backlash against immigrants, Canadian anti-Semitism, and the anti-Jewish polemic of mainstream Christianity. After putting the question in historical context, Davies and Nefsky dedicate a chapter to each of the major denominations: United, Anglican, Presbyterian, and Baptist/Evangelical churches. A separate chapter deals with the Lutherans, Mennonites, and Quakers.

In each chapter, the authors note that the majority of the faithful did not speak out. But neither were the churches entirely silent. Editorialists, activists, and some church leaders tried to garner support for Hitler's Jewish victims. In each congregation singular voices called out in what was clearly a wilderness of apathy, xenophobia, suspicion, and blindness. The most controversial part of this book no doubt deals with the reaction of those Christian churches whose theological and cultural roots can be traced to Germany, the Lutherans and the Mennonites of German extraction. In both these communities, loyalty to German culture and the painful memories of anti-German propaganda during World War I meant that sympathy for Germans often overrode sympathy for the Jews.

In their final chapter, Davies and Nefsky weigh the historical evidence and find that the churches were not as silent as Abella and Troper suggest. The accusation needs to be nuanced. There were denunciations of Hitler, some relief work, and some lobbying of a cynical government determined to keep Jews out. However, the authors are not willing to let the churches off the hook. First, they accuse the churches of abandoning their critical distance on Canadian culture and public policy. The churches too often acted as a mirror of Canadian society, reflecting its prejudices, apathy, and self-interest. Second, they ask if the silence of some churches was not rooted in their most treasured intellectual and spiritual traditions, especially their triumphalistic attitude toward Judaism. Some churches, especially the Presbyterians, opposed Hitler but were callous toward his Jewish victims. The Presbyterian leaders,

according to Davies and Nefsky, seemed more concerned with converting Jews than with saving them from persecution.

This is an enormously useful book. It sheds light on an area that most Canadian scholars, politicians, and Christians have refused to examine. It attempts to answer an important question and does so in a balanced and sophisticated manner. For students of Canadian public policy, it should serve as a reminder of the importance of what sociologist Robert Nisbet called the “pre-political” in shaping political decisions. While Canadian immigration policy was allegedly dictated by practical restraints, the attitudes and values of the principle actors may well have been formed by their religious identity. It may be no coincidence that the two chief architects of Canada’s immigration policy, Prime Minister W.L. Mackenzie King and his impossibly inflexible director of immigration, Frederick C. Blair, were callous to the plight of Jews. They were also both Presbyterians, a denomination that Davies and Nefsky describe as largely unmoved by the plight of European Jewry compared even to the Anglicans or the United Church.

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**Canada: The State of the Federation 1997,
Non-Constitutional Renewal**

edited by Harvey Lazar. Kingston: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen’s University, 1998. Pp. vii, 364.

During the summer of 1998 there have been numerous media reports about the progress of the “social union” talks and about the Supreme Court’s reference opinion on how Quebec might legally separate from Canada. Indispensable background reading for an understanding of these developments is the latest edition of this annual volume. In 13 chapters a distinguished group of contributors examines the causes and consequences of a shift away from the drama of constitutional politics toward a more col-

laborative style of intergovernmental relations. The book consists of an opening overview chapter, a closing chronology of events, three chapters on the social union, three on the role of particular provincial governments, two on the Agreement on Internal Trade, two on high-profile policy domains, and one on the Chrétien government’s approach to national unity.

A short review cannot convey the strengths of this collection or carefully assess the arguments presented. Instead, I will highlight some key themes which might draw other readers to this valuable volume.

As editor, Harvey Lazar suggests that five broad factors explain the emergence of the collaborative federalism of the 1990s: post-referendum trauma, fiscal problems, western demands, protest parties in a fragmented Parliament, and the impact of new public management ideas. Lazar, Keith Banting, and John Richards offer expert and somewhat divergent perspectives on the past, present, and future of the social union. Richards favours a stricter realignment of responsibilities with the provinces focusing on social services and Ottawa concentrating on income provision; while Lazar would accept more overlap in recognition of interdependence and mobility. Roger Gibbins describes Alberta’s aggressive intergovernmental role, led by its Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. Sid Noel identifies a radical reorientation of Ontario’s approach to federalism which began under the New Democratic Party and has been extended by the Conservatives. He argues there has been a decoupling of Ontario’s economic and political interests. Réjean Pelletier argues that Jacques Parizeau and Lucien Bouchard represent two different sides of sovereignty, with Bouchard being the more pragmatic of the two, and therefore Quebec’s stance on intergovernmental issues may at times be more conciliatory. Both articles (by Robert Knox and Daniel Schwanen) on the Agreement on Internal Trade argue that some progress has been achieved, but not at the pace envisaged by the signatories. Audrey

Doerr presents a detailed account of the progress achieved through intergovernmental collaboration on aboriginal treaty and land claims, economic development and education. She acknowledges that progress is partly in the eyes of the beholder. On the environmental front, Patrick Fafard concludes that for a variety of reasons, little progress toward harmonization has been made. Robert Howse describes the Chrétien approach to national unity as based on the concept of an "associative community," a notion that involves less national policy leadership and relies more on partnerships with other governments and private groups to deliver programs.

In summary, the volume provides a broad assessment of what seems to be a widely shared, future vision of the Canadian federalism in which citizens will have fewer, less meaningful contacts with their national government. Not everyone will find this vision a compelling one.

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Governments, Parties and Public Sector Employees: Canada, United States, Britain and France

by André Blais, Donald E. Blake and Stéphane Dion.
Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997. Pp. ix, 189. \$22.95.

This is a comparative institutional study of the relationship between governments, political parties, and public sector employees. It looks at state-society relationships in four western industrialized countries. The book contains six chapters: i) Introduction, ii) Are Public Sector Employees in Canada Better Off with the Liberals? iii) In Search of the Bureaucrat's Friend on Capital Hill, iv) Must British Civil Servants Fear the Tories? v) Should French Civil Servants Vote for the Left? and vi) Conclusion.

The authors use quantitative and qualitative techniques: time-series for longitudinal analysis, legislative debates, statements, and party platforms. They

look at four variables: the size of public employment, the level of wages, the system of bargaining, and the political rights of public employees. They compare political parties on a left-right ideological spectrum (pp. 10-16).

The authors address an important question: Are parties and governments of the left more generous toward public sector employees than those of the right? They looked at four countries over a 40-year period in four different areas — employment, wages, bargaining, and political rights — and produced longitudinal comparisons of government policies as well as cross-sectional comparison of party positions (p. 188). They assert that Canada, Britain, and France each provided us with eight tests: four policy domains with longitudinal and cross-sectional comparisons. The United States constitutes a richer case because of its presidential system (p. 158). The authors suggest that the study confirms the general hypothesis, but that there are many qualifications (pp. 158-164). An interesting observation, which can assist in the improvement of policy studies, is their assertion that "parties tend to diverge more with respect to the actual decisions they make when in power. When they form the government, parties of the left are not as generous as they indicated they would be. The same is true for the right: it is not as tough as it said it would be" (p. 160). This finding suggests that we should examine the relationship between political parties and the Public Service in a more systematic way than we have done in the past.

It should be pointed out that there are difficulties with the study because of the variation in the institutional arrangements in the selected countries examined. Canada and the United States are federal systems. Yet even among these two, there are major differences. There are also major ideological differences in the various systems examined. Accordingly, the left-right continuum represents an oversimplification which breaks down under more detailed analysis (see pp. 158-64). Nevertheless, it is a good starting point.

The book presents a study of the relationship between parties, governments, and public sector employees. This relationship needs more careful study and analysis. The authors note that "focusing on one specific group allows us to study the relationship between society and polity in a more thorough fashion. In particular, because we are interested in how parties and governments treat their public employees, we look at policies of direct concern to that particular group, policies that have never been examined in the literature" (p. 1). The study provides important linkages between public administration and public policy. Political scientists study political parties while a more specialized group study the Public Service. These groups should complement each other.

The issues addressed by the authors are very important as we approach the year 2000 and beyond, given the global interest in the reform of the public sector in general and of the Public Service in particular. We need more institutional studies that focus on political parties beyond the electoral process. This study initiates such a process.

Political parties must deal with the question raised in this book in a more systematic way than they have done in the past. The problem stems from the fact that there is a need to formulate a more strategic approach to the study and practice of public personnel management. Why is there no long-term personnel planning in the public sector? This problem has become acute in Canada because of the passage of the *Public Service Reform Act* in 1992. Political parties, whether they are on the left or the right, must formulate appropriate strategies for dealing with the Public Service. Accordingly, this study presents a good starting point for improved understanding of this relationship. It is interesting to note that one of the authors is now a member of the Chrétien Cabinet. This book is important to the senior Public Service which must formulate alternative policies before elections.

With respect to Canada, they conclude: "Our results strongly confirm the general hypothesis that

parties on the left tend to be more sympathetic toward the public sector than parties of the right" (p. 44). In the United States, they conclude, "the party orientation of the President has little effect on federal employees' conditions, but party balance in Congress matters a great deal" (p. 85). In the United Kingdom, "public employment has grown more frequently when Labour was in power" (p. 121). The French situation is more complicated (pp. 155-56). Here we begin to see the complexities inherent in institutional analyses of state-society relations.

Overall, the study shows that there are more complexities involved when the analysis examines issues related to wages, bargaining, and political rights than with the question of the size of public employment. However, these issues are well known by scholars of public sector management. Accordingly, the book is very helpful in building bridges between the sub-disciplines involved with the study of public policy.

It should be noted, however, that the authors provide some interesting explanations for some of the divergencies found in the study. It is an interesting study of a very important area in politics and public policy. The issues should be addressed in greater detail by other scholars. This book has opened an important area of analysis which should be explored at greater length.

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Comparing Federal Systems in the 1990s

by Ronald L. Watts. Kingston: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen's University, 1996. Pp. xiv, 126.

The quest for the right balance in roles and responsibilities of the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary in multicentred governments, has been vigorously pursued by many nations over the past several centuries. These concerns have been heightened in recent years in view of the mega change

brought about by internal and external factors. The generic catalysts for this change include the demise of communism, regional and ethnic conflicts, desire to break away from the vestiges of colonialism as in Africa, government failures, assertion of basic rights by the courts, information and knowledge revolution, globalization of economic activities, and the demonstration effects of the European Union and regional trading areas. As countries are struggling to cope with these changes, there is little guidance available to individual nations as to the spectrum of choices available based upon experiences of other nations. Ronald Watts points out that even in mature federations such as Canada, political leadership may not be fully informed about the spectrum of feasible choices in dealing with questions of critical importance such as keeping Quebec happily within the Canadian fold.

In this monograph, Watts fills this void by bringing within easy reach of interested readers both the diverse institutional approaches in dealing with complexities faced by the federal systems and positive and negative lessons arising from these experiences. For this purpose, he reviews the experiences of six mature federations (United States, Switzerland, Canada, Australia, Austria, and Germany), two multilingual and multi-ethnic federations in non-industrial countries (India and Malaysia), two emerging federations in industrial countries (Belgium and Spain) and finally two bi-communal federations that failed (Czechoslovakia and Pakistan). The experiences of these federations are reviewed in terms of their approaches to the division of powers, incentives and mechanisms to sustain political and economic union, processes of conflict recognition and resolution and dealing with threats of political polarization and disintegration. In doing so, Watts distills a large body of complex literature and provides important lessons in designing federal institutions and in dealing with stresses and strains arising in federal systems. These lessons would be of interest not just to Canada but to all countries, federal or unitary.

Key lessons arising from Watts' analysis can be summarized as follows: (a) federalism represents a perennial quest for right balance — between inter-governmental competition and cooperation; between asymmetry and uniformity; among globalization, centralization, regionalization and localization of public functions. The success of a federal system critically depends upon its flexibility to adapt and adjust to changing circumstances and to strike a fine balance between polarized influences. A federal system that is too rigid to make required adjustments would be susceptible to disintegration; (b) federal systems comprising only two constituent units are likely to fail under these systems, there is no opportunity for shifting alliances and coalitions among the constituent units to resolve conflicts; (c) institutions of intergovernmental coordination that allow regional and local input in federal decision making can play an important role in keeping the federation together. The German Upper House of the Parliament (Bundesrat) comprising state (länder) government representatives, presents a fine example of such an institution as it brings to bear regional interests in federal legislation as well as to serve as a forum for intergovernmental coordination; (d) the recognition of the supremacy of the constitution in political culture is critical to the preservation of a federation; and (e) formal constitutional provisions for succession, as in the Ethiopian constitution, should be avoided as they might encourage or provoke sentiments for separation.

Overall, I find this book highly illuminating and a treat to read. I recommend it highly to all readers who have a stake, or an interest, in peace, political and economic stability, and improving government performance.

ANWAR SHAH, The World Bank, Washington, DC

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